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The statement (p. 220) that "of 'chests' and 'chests of drawers' there were doubtless goodly numbers in the ship," is hardly exact. It is not probable that Luther's hymn in German was known to the Leyden Separatists. If he would have us understand by "services" over the dead, anything as religious in form as in later days, even of the eighteenth century, we cannot agree with him. Neither the author's text in detail, nor the rhetoric of Choate and Goodwin quoted, gives any indication as to what a floating pest house the Mayflower was, as she lay in the harbor and then departed, and into which, what with the profane sailors and the horrible pest, no normal Pilgrim in the company would wish to return. We need not dwell on the funny geographical error in Dr. Holmes's quoted verses, nor the author's slip alleging that Carlyle was an "Englishman," nor on the grammatical error of Lowell on the title-page. Of printer's mistakes, or poor proof reading, in a work containing so many old forms and uncouth spellings, there are, to the author's credit, next to none. There is an excellent index. On the whole it must be confessed that Dr. Ames has proved most of the points which he has freshly made, while in thoroughness of discussion, and in the massing, critical use and comparison of authorities, his book is a model. The matter is fully equal to the superb form in which this noblest contribution to the subject made for a century has been clothed.

WILLIAM ELLIOT GRIFFIS.

The Life of Charles Thomson, Secretary of the Continental Congress and Translator of the Bible from the Greek. By LEWIS R. HARLEY. (Philadelphia: Jacobs and Co. 1900. Pp. 244.)

It is a somewhat remarkable fact that more than three-quarters of a century should have elapsed since the death of Charles Thomson, Secretary of the Continental Congress, before a formal biography of this sterling patriot should appear. The delay may have been due in part to the difficulty in securing the data in regard to his life, but more probably it may be accounted for by the fact that "to the hero worshipper, the Secretary of the Continental Congress" did "not prove a very inspiring subject." Be that as it may, his biographer points out that his secretaryship was only a portion of his services to his country and his fellow-man: "A finished scholar, he brought judgment into public life; an ardent patriot, he labored incessantly to strengthen the sentiment for independence in Pennsylvania; a skillful organizer, he aided powerfully to hold together the discordant factions of the Continental Congress; in the retirement of private life, he made a valuable contribution to Biblical literature."

Thomson's life falls naturally into three periods, his early life, his political career, and the closing period of thirty-five years devoted to literary and scientific pursuits. Of the two hundred pages of this biography about twenty-five are given to the first, and some eighty pages to each of the succeeding periods of his life. The volume is subdivided into

ten chapters, the first two of which treat of Thomson's rather eventful early years, and his career as student, teacher and business man. These are very brief, contain considerable matter which is not germane to the work, and add little to the previous knowledge of this period of his life. The third chapter presents Thomson in his first public mission, reviewing his honorable services rendered in connection with the Indian negotiations in Pennsylvania in 1757-1758. The nature of the contents of the succeeding chapter may be inferred from its title, "Charles Thomson, 'The Sam Adams of Philadelphia.'" While little that is new is brought out, this chapter gives a good succinct account of Thomson's share in the pre-Revolutionary movement.

The interest of the student of American history, as well as that of the general reader, will naturally center in the chapter which relates to Thomson's work as secretary of the Continental Congress; not only because his name is remembered chiefly on account of his patriotic services in connection with this office, but also because any new light which may be thrown on the work of the "Old Congress" will be eagerly welcomed. According to tradition, Thomson, after his retirement from office, collected material for, and prepared a history of, the Continental Congress, but his courage failing him, he destroyed his manuscript as well as nearly all the papers he had collected. This loss is irreparable, for he was better qualified than any of his contemporaries to write such a work. Indeed John Jay wrote to him in 1783, when urging him to prepare such a history, "I consider no person in the world is so perfectly acquainted with the rise, conduct and conclusion of the American Revolution as yourself."

The chapter of his biography, which deals with his secretaryship is, we regret to say, decidedly disappointing. It is distinctly inadequate, only thirty-seven pages out of the two hundred are devoted to the most important and best known years of his life, and more than one-half of this space is given to quotations from Thomson's letters and from secondary works. It seems to us that the author would have been able to present more fully the significance of Thomson's work and influence after a careful study of the manuscript records of the Continental Congress, preserved at Washington. Such a study he does not appear to have made. He has therefore failed to add materially to the contributions of Dr. Friedenwald and other investigators of the archives of this Congress, upon whose work he relies and from whom he freely quotes in regard to Thomson's methods of keeping the records of Congress.

The later chapters of the volume, which deal with Thomson's scientific interests, his literary pursuits, his personal character, his home, family and closing days, appear to us to be much more successfully written than the earlier chapters. His biographer pays especial attention to his contribution to Biblical literature, and with reason, for had Thomson never been connected with the Continental Congress, his name would still have been known to classical and Biblical scholars, owing to his translation of the Bible from the Greek. In 1808, after twenty years'

labor, he "gave to the world the first American translation of the Septuagint into English." Several examples are given from Thomson's translation in parallel columns with the texts of the authorized and revised versions, showing that in some instances he anticipated the rendition of the revised version.

Copious extracts from the published letters and writings of Thomson, as well as from a few letters not hitherto published, add to the value of the work. We are inclined to think, however, that the author has indulged in an excessive use of quotations from secondary works. A general bibliography, as well as a special one of Thomson's manuscripts and published works, is appended. The volume presents a neat appearance, and is illustrated with a portrait of Thomson and a view of his residence.

It must be owned that the author essayed a difficult task in preparing a life of Thomson, and, while we cannot regard the volume as making any important contribution to the record of his political career, it presents in readable and convenient form the chief facts of his life, together with numerous extracts from his correspondence and writings, as well as the estimate of scholars upon the various phases of his activities.

HERMAN V. AMES.

Life and Times of William Lowndes of South Carolina. 1782-1822.

By MRS. ST. JULIEN RAVENEL. (Boston and New York : Houghton, Mifflin and Co. 1901. Pp. viii, 258.)

A SINGLE golden sentence has kept fragrant the memory of William Lowndes through nearly a century of our history—"The Presidency is not an office to be either solicited or declined"—but it has not availed to keep in memory the facts of his career on which his recognition as a figure worthy of study and preservation must rest. A series of untoward accidents has prevented for nearly three generations the publication of the record of his life, accidents, too, which have resulted in the destruction of the materials for anything but a very meager memorial. His letters and papers, understood to have been very abundant and complete, were intrusted in 1860 to a very competent writer, who duly wrote out a full biography. The death of this gentleman during the war left the manuscript in the hands of a relative of Mr. Lowndes, who also died before he had secured its publication, and with him disappeared, strangely but finally, the entire manuscript biography. Meantime the great fire of 1861 in Charleston had destroyed the whole mass of materials from which this biography had been written. A small collection of private letters and notebooks was all that remained ; and now, after nearly forty years of further delay, the reverential and careful hand of a granddaughter has given us the present small volume. We must welcome it as the best and most we are ever to know of a highly interesting character, of one who to his associates and contemporaries in public life seemed truly great and wise, and of one who even in the dimness of the twilight which has so long settled over his memory has still stood as an ideal of noble, unselfish public service. The present biographer has skilfully used her scanty ma-